

IN THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims contains no amendments and is provided for the convenience of the Examiner.

1. (Previously Presented): A method of distributing units of encrypted information and providing conditional access to the units, using a secure device capable of selectively enabling decryption of said units, the method comprising:

 distributing a stream comprising the units of information successively, the stream including a plurality of entitlement control messages, wherein each of the entitlement control messages is linked to a respective time-stamp, the respective time stamp associated with a time-stamp value indicative of a time at which the entitlement control message linked to the time-stamp was distributed; and

 sending an entitlement management message to the secure device, the entitlement management message including a specification of a range of time-stamp values and entitling the secure device to enable decryption of the units of information that are linked to time-stamps with time stamp values in that range,

 wherein:

 the range has a starting point kept at a predetermined distance prior to a time value corresponding to when the entitlement management message is sent; and

 the starting point advances with the time value corresponding to when the entitlement management message is sent.

2. (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the stream is distributed to a plurality of subscribers, each with an own secure device and wherein the entitlement management message is one of a plurality of respective entitlement management messages, each sent receivable for the secure device of a respective one of the subscribers, each entitlement management message including a specification of a respective range of time-stamp values, including,

receiving subscriber dependent subscription information; and
setting the predetermined distance in each of the respective ranges according to a respective distance value and selecting each respective distance value from a set of two or more distance values, dependent on the subscription information for the subscriber for whose secure device the entitlement management message is receivable.

3. (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the entitlement management message is one of a series of successive entitlement management messages, each specifying its own range so that said range slides with time so that the predetermined distance comprises a time independent distance to said time value.

4. (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the secure device maintains and updates a current time value corresponding to the time values of the time stamps as they are distributed as a function of time, the secure device adjusting said starting point to the predetermined distance before the current time value, the secure device deriving the predetermined distance from said one of the entitlement management unit at least for a series of successive current time values, wherein the predetermined distance is time independent.

5. (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the range ends before the time value corresponding to when the entitlement management message is sent.

6. (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 2, the subscription information comprising, for one of the subscribers, a selection of a further range ending prior to the time value of the time stamps distributed at a time of receiving said selection, the method comprising sending a further entitlement management message in addition to said entitlement messages, the further entitlement management specifying the further range and entitling the secure device to enable decryption of units of information that are linked to time-stamps with values in that further range.

7. (Previously Presented): An information distribution system that provides conditional access to units of encrypted information, the system comprising:

an information distribution device arranged to distribute a stream of successive units of encrypted information, wherein each of the entitlement control messages is linked to a respective time-stamp, the respective time stamp associated with a time-stamp value indicative of a time at which the entitlement control message linked to the time-stamp was distributed; and

at least one information receiving device arranged to receive the stream;

a secure device coupled to the at least one information receiving device, for selectively enabling decryption of the units under control of an entitlement management message including a specification of a range of time-stamp values and entitling the secure device to enable decryption of units of information that are linked to time-stamps with values in that range;

the information distribution device being arranged to send the entitlement message so that the range has a starting point kept at a predetermined distance prior to a time value corresponding to when the entitlement management message is sent and the starting point advances with the time value corresponding to when the entitlement management message is sent.

8. (Previously Presented): The system according to Claim 7, the system comprising a plurality of secure devices, each for a respective subscriber, wherein the entitlement management message is one of a plurality of respective entitlement management messages, each sent receivable for a respective one of the secure devices, each of the entitlement management messages including a specification of a respective range of time-stamp values, and wherein the information distribution device includes

an input for receiving subscriber dependent subscription information;

means for setting the predetermined distance in each of the respective ranges according to a respective distance value, the means selecting each respective distance value from a set of two or more distance values, dependent on the subscription information for the subscriber for whose secure device the entitlement management message is receivable.

9. (Previously Presented): A secure device for use in an information distribution system that provides conditional access to a stream of information units linked to time stamps, the secure device comprising:

an input for receiving entitlement management messages;

a memory for maintaining a current time count;

a management unit for selectively enabling decryption of the information units under control of the entitlement management messages, the management unit being arranged to implement one of the entitlement management messages that includes a specification of a range of time-stamp values linked to entitlement control messages included in the units of information, for which the secure device has to enable decryption, wherein a starting point for the range has a time value kept at a predetermined distance prior to the current time count and the time value of the starting point advances with the current time.

10. (Previously Presented): An information distribution device arranged to distribute a stream of successive units of encrypted information to a secure device, each unit linked to a respective time-stamp, the device comprising:

a transmitting unit for transmitting the stream, the stream including a plurality of entitlement control messages, wherein each of the entitlement control messages is linked to a respective time-stamp, the respective time stamp associated with a time-stamp value indicative of a time at which the entitlement control message linked to the time-stamp was transmitted;

the transmitting unit for transmitting an entitlement management message including a specification of a range of time-stamp values, the entitlement management message entitling the secure device to enable decryption of units of information that are linked to time-stamps with values in that range so that the range has a starting point kept at a predetermined distance prior to a time value corresponding to when the entitlement management message is sent and the starting point advances with the time value corresponding to when the entitlement management message is sent.

11. (Previously Presented): The information distribution device according to Claim 10, arranged to distribute the stream to a plurality of subscribers, each having a respective secure device, the entitlement management message being one of a plurality of entitlement management messages for reception by respective ones of the secure devices, each entitlement management message specifying a respective range of time-stamp values, the device including,

an input for receiving subscriber dependent subscription information;

means for setting the predetermined distance in each of the respective ranges according to a respective distance value, the means selecting each respective distance value from a set of two or more distance values, dependent on the subscription information for the subscriber for whose secure device the entitlement management message is receivable.

12. (Previously Presented): The method of claim 1, wherein sending an entitlement management message includes entitling the secure device to enable decryption of units of information that are linked to time-stamps with values with the starting point in the past containing a television program or a part of the television program prior to the time value of a current time.

13. (Previously Presented): The method of claim 12, wherein the starting point is at least one or more hours prior to the time value of the current time.
14. (Previously Presented): The method of claim 12, wherein the starting point is at least one day prior to the time value of the current time.
15. (Previously Presented): The method of claim 1, wherein sending an entitlement management message includes entitling the secure device to enable decryption of units of information that are linked to time-stamps with values with the starting point at least far enough into the past to contain at least a television program and at least one week prior to the time value of the time stamps distributed concurrent with the entitlement management message.
16. (Previously Presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the range of time-stamp values is defined relative to the current time of day.
17. (Previously Presented): The system of claim 7, wherein said range of time-stamp values is a sliding window.
18. (Previously Presented): The secure device of claim 9, wherein said range of time-stamp values is measured relative to a current time of day.
19. (Previously Presented): The secure device of claim 18, wherein the management unit is further to determine whether a received time stamp is within the range of values relative to the current time of day.

20. (Previously Presented): A system for use in an information distribution system that provides conditional access to a stream of information units linked to time stamp, comprising: a plurality of modules, each module comprising instructions retained on at least one machine-readable storage medium, that when executed by a machine perform identified operations, wherein the modules comprise:

an input for receiving entitlement management messages;

a memory for maintaining a current time count; and

a management unit for selectively enabling decryption of the information units under control of the entitlement management messages, the management unit being arranged to implement one of the entitlement management messages that includes a specification of a range of time-stamp values linked to entitlement control messages included in the units of information, for which the secure device has to enable decryption, wherein a starting point for the range initially has a time value prior to the current time count,

wherein each entitlement management message specifies its own range so that said range of time-stamp values slides with time so that the starting point has a predetermined distance to said current time count and the starting point advances with the current time count.